

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 071215Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7982
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T TEHRAN 6884

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR MASS JO UR

SUBJ: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE-SHAH-RIFAI MEETING

REF: A. AMMAN 3482, B. AMMAN 3552

1. DURING AUDIENCE AFTERNOON JULY 6, SHAH TOLD ME OF HIS MEETING TWO DAYS EARLIER WITH RIFAI. MEETING TOOK PLACE BEFORE RECEIPT OF REF B.

2. SHAH SAID MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN RIFAI'S DESCRIPTION OF SOVIET AIR DEFENSE OFFER WAS THAT SOVIETS WERE DEMANDING CASH PAYMENT FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE. AS SAUDI PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE \$500 MILLION FOR JORDANIAN AIR DEFENSE WAS VALID ONLY FOR WESTERN SYSTEMS, SHAH COMMENTED THAT SOVIET PROPOSAL HAS ALMOST THE SAME EFFECT AS IF IT HAD BEEN DISIGNED "TO GIVE HUSSEIN AN EXCUSE TO DISENGAGE.Z SOVIETS HAD PLEADED FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN STIPULATING A CASH SALE.

3. RIFAI MADE A STRONG PLEA TO SHAH TO EFFECT THAT JORDAN WOULD BE IN TERRIBLE CONDITION IF IT DID NOT ACQUIRE ADEQUATE AIR DEFENSE. SHAH ARGUED STRENUOUSLY AGAINST A DEAL WITH SOVIETS AS HE HAD DONE PREVIOUSLY THROUGH HIS AMB TO AMMAN. IF JORDAN ACQUIRED SOVIET SYSTEM, SHAH ASKED RIFAI, "HOW WILL YOU EAT?". SAUDIS AND KUWAIT WOULD TERMINATE THEIR SUBSIDIES TO

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JORDAN AND COUNTRY WOULD BE ISOLATED FROM ITS IMPORTANT

FRIENDS IN REGION. SHAH SAID HE HOPED THAT SAUDIA ARABIA AND KUWAIT WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR JORDAN AS LONG AS NEEDED.

4. CONTRARY TO FEARS OF IRANIAN AMB IN AMMAN, SHAH WAS VERY RELAXED AS TO PROTOCOL ASPECTS OF HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO RAYADH AT SAME TIME RIFAI WAS IN TEHRAN. SHAH CONFIRMED THAT THERE WAS NO AMBIGUITY IN SAUDI'S OFFER OF \$500 MILLION FOR WESTERN AIR DEFENSE FOR JORDAN. HE SAID HE WOULD NOW AWAIT REPORT OF WHAT HUSSEIN HAD BEEN ABLE TO WORK OUT WITH SAG.

5. REGARDING EXACTLY WHAT SOVIETS OFFERED JORDANIANS, SHAH SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT IN ADDITION TO SA-7S AND SHILKAS, RUSSIANS OFFERED A NEW 4-MISSILE UNIT WHICH HE IDENTIFIED AS "QUADRAT." SHAH ALSO SAID THAT HE WAS QUITE SURE COST OF SOVIET SYSTEM WAS \$550 MILLION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE COULD BE SOME CONFUSION IN TERMINOLOGY IN TRANSLATION FROM RUSSIAN TO ARABIC TO ENGLISH.
HELMS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIR DEFENSE, MILITARY SALES, MISSILES, MEETING PROCEEDINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TEHRAN06884
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760262-0607
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760782/aaaacuag.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 AMMAN 3482, 76 AMMAN 3552
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE-SHAH-RIFAI MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, JO, UR, SA, IR, US, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMED REZA), (RIFAI, ZAYD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006